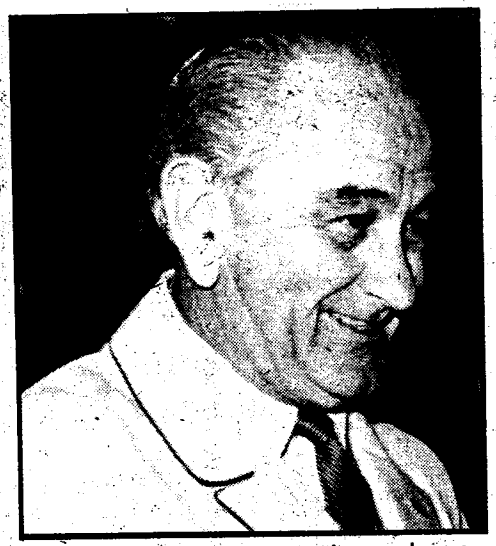
Midnight 7-12-76

30 Watergate Witnesses Have Met Violent Deaths

MARTHA MITCHELL: first to point finger at Nixon.



LBJ: "We've been running a damn Murder Inc. in the Caribbean."

SAM GIANCANA: Mafia chief, had ties with E. Howard Hunt and CIA.

JUDITH EXNER: mistress of both Giancana and JFK.

What are the odds of 30 people — all involved in the same horrible scandal — dying within four years?

Because that's what happened with Watergate.

Since the break-in at the Democratic National Headquarters on June 17, 1972, there have been 30 deaths — many of them violent — all of people involved in one way or another.

The odds are at least 100,000,000,000,000,000 to one. (One hundred million billion to one).

An actuary of the London Sunday Times worked out that figure after 18 witnesses in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy died within four years of his death.

Now Watergate has surpassed even that violence.

By MALCOLM ABRAMS
MIDNIGHT Staff Writer

The CIA is behind it all. That's the conclusion of Mae Brussell — one of America's foremost assassination experts — a researcher who has collected every pertinent newspaper story, every book, every document since the Watergate break-in four years ago on the night of June 17, 1972.

Miss Brussell is the only person in America who perceived the gruesome string of deaths that stretches from Watergate to now.

She believes that a faction within the Central Intelligence Agency is responsible not only for Watergate, but for the assassinations of John and Robert Kennedy.

She believes, as President Nixon stated on the Watergate tapes, that everything horrible that's happened in American politics is connected, starting with the Bay of Pigs.

Some of the 30 people who died, she says, knew only about CIA involvement in Watergate. Some of them knew much, much more.

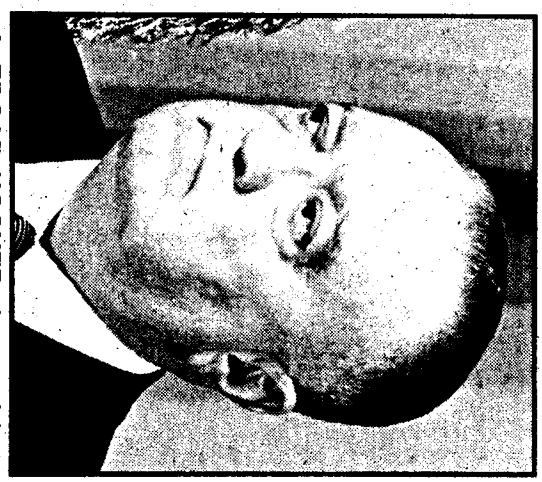
A few of the dead, like Martha Mitchell, Lyndon Johnson, Congressman Hale Boggs and Mafia hoodlum Sam Giancana, are well-known. Others might have been — if they had lived and told their stories.

But 30 are dead. And there's no reason to believe that there won't be more.

1. Beverly Kaye, 42, died of a "massive stroke" in December, 1973, while riding in the White House elevator. She was Secret Service agent John Bull's secretary and her job included the actual storing and preservation of the White House tapes.

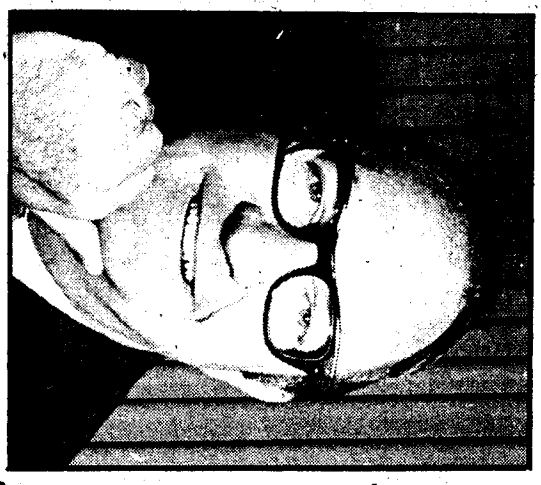
It is almost without question, says Mae Brussell, that she knew what was on those tapes, including the 18 minutes of recorded

E. HOWARD HUNT: one of the main 'plumbers.'



J. EDGAR HOOVER: knew about White House 'dirty tricks'?

BOGGS: died in plane crash, had 'startling revelations on Watergate.'



CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM MILLS: an apparent suicide.

MAE BRUSSELL has just completed a book titled "Beyond the Call of Duty" which deals with the mysterious deaths of Watergate figures.

conversations which were mysteriously erased.

As reported in the West Coast news service, "Earth News," on June 5, 1974, from the stories she told her friends and neighbors, she was convinced that the president and his aides were involved in the Watergate bugging and cover-up.

2. Murray Chotiner, a long-time friend of Nixon's was killed when a government truck ran into his car on January 23, 1974. At first it was reported that Chotiner suffered only a broken leg, but he died a week later.

According to a March 31, 1973 article in the Los Angeles Times, Chotiner may have been one of the people who received the tape recordings made inside the Democratic campaign headquarters in the Watergate building.

3. William Mills, the Congressman from Maryland, was found shot to death — an apparent suicide — one day after it was disclosed that he failed to report a $25,000 campaign contribution given to him by President Nixon's re-election finance committee.

Mills, 48, was discovered with a 12-gauge shotgun by his feet and an "alleged suicide note" pinned to his body. In all, seven such notes were found, apparently written by Mills, although this was never verified.

According to Miss Brussell, the $25,000 came from the $1.7 million dollar secret fund for "dirty tricks" used by the Committee to Re-Elect the President.

4. and 5. James Webster and James Glover, key men in Congressman Mills' campaign, were killed in a car accident in February of 1972. Another campaign worker stated in the Washington Post on May 23, 1973, that the illegal $25,000 contribution was delivered to Mills' campaign manager James Webster.

6. Hale Boggs, the Congressman from Louisiana and a member of the Warren Commission, died in July of 1972, one month after the Watergate arrests. Boggs and two other men disappeared when the light aircraft in which they were flying crashed in Alaska.

The Los Angeles Star, on November 22, 1973, reported that "Boggs had startling revelations on Watergate and the assassination of President Kennedy."

Richard Nixon made some unintelligible remarks about Congressman Boggs which were recorded on the White House tapes, just seven days after the Watergate break-in.

7. Dorothy Hunt, the wife of convicted White House "plumber" E. Howard Hunt, was killed, along with 41 other people, when United Airlines Flight 553 crashed near Chicago's O'Hare Airport on Dec. 8, 1972.

Mrs. Hunt, who, like her husband, had worked for the CIA, was allegedly carrying $100,000 in "hush" money so her husband would not implicate White House officials in Watergate.

The day after the crash, White House aide Egil (Bud) Krogh was appointed Undersecretary of Transportation, supervising the National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Aviation Association — the two agencies charged with investigating the airline crash.

A week later, Nixon's deputy assistant Alexander Butterfield was made the new head of the FAA, and five weeks later Dwight Chapin, the president's appointment secretary, was dispatched to Chicago to become a top executive with United Airlines.

The airplane crash was blamed on equipment malfunctions.

8. and 9. Ralph Blodgett and James Krueger, attorneys for Northern Natural Gas Co., were killed in the same airplane as Mrs. Hunt.

The two men, Miss Brussell contends, had documents linking Attorney General John Mitchell to Watergate, and documents of a secret transfer of El Paso Natural Gas Co. stock made to Mitchell after the Justice Department dropped a $300 million anti-trust suit against the company.

The money from these stocks may have been used for political espionage.

Blodgett told friends before boarding the plane in Washington that he would "never live to get to Chicago."

10. and 11. Dr. and Mrs. Gary Morris died in March of 1972 when their boat mysteriously disappeared off the Caribbean Island of St. Lucia. Their bodies were never found. But their names were on the dead body of Mrs. Dorothy Hunt, according to an article in the Oct. 3, 1975 Washington Post.

"The plane crash that killed Mrs. Hunt in

Martha Mitchell was number 30.

The thirtieth key figure in the Watergate scandal to die.

Murders, suicides, automobile smashups, mysterious illnesses, airplane crashes, one after another they took the lives of people who knew too much about Watergate.

Who will be the next victim to be struck down?

What secrets still remain that the Senate Select Committee didn't discover?

What terrible truths are being kept from the American people?

Who has what to hide?

Chicago has now been officially ruled an accident," the story stated. "But there's one bizarre coincidence that may never be explained.

"Her red wallet at the time of her death had a slip of paper with the name of a Washington psychiatrist, Dr. Gary Morris, on it."

Neither Howard Hunt nor his wife were patients of the doctor, who was already dead at the time of the plane crash.

It is interesting to note, Mae Brussell says, that Dr. Morris was an expert in hypnosis and that Mr. Hunt used "mind control" in his espionage work.

12. J. Edgar Hoover, head of the FBI, died on May 1, 1972, a month before Watergate. There is considerable evidence that he may have known about the White House "dirty tricks."

An article in the Harvard Crimson quotes Felipe De Diego, a Cuban exile who took part in the break-in at psychiatrist Daniel Ellsberg's office, as saying:

"Two burglaries took place at Hoover's Washington home. The first was in the winter of 1972 to retrieve documents that might be used for blackmail against the White House.

"After the first burglary," according to Diego, "a second burglary was carried out; this time, whether by design or misunderstanding, a poison, thyonphosphate genre, was placed in Hoover's personal toilet articles. Hoover died shortly after that."

Thyonphosphate genre is a drug that induces heart seizures. Its presence in a corpse is undetectable without an autopsy.

No autopsy was ever performed on the body of J. Edgar Hoover.

13. Sam Giancana, the Mafia chief, was murdered on June 22, 1975, as he was about to testify before Sen. Frank Church's Senate Committee, investigating the use of underworld figures by the CIA, for the purpose of assassinating foreign leaders. Giancana had ties to E. Howard Hunt and the CIA.

His murder is unsolved, although police say "it didn't look like a Mafia hit." His former girlfriend, Judith Campbell Exner recently revealed her secret romance with JFK.

14. Lyndon Baines Johnson, the former president, died on January 20, 1973, in a helicopter ambulance en route to San Antonio, Tex.

Three months before his death, Johnson was quoted in the San Francisco Chronicle as saying, "We've been running a damn Murder Inc. in the Caribbean." This was two years before Sen. Church's committee revealed the plots to assassinate foreign leaders.

"Coincidentally," Mae Brussell says, "Johnson died in the arms of secret service agent Mike Howard, who in 1963 had been assigned to protect Marina Oswald after her husband was killed."

15. George Bell, assistant to Charles Coulson, special counsel to the White House, died of unreported causes on June 30, 1973. When questioned about President Nixon's infamous "enemies list," Coulson told the House Subcommittee Investigating Watergate that the "late George Bell" was responsible for the list of 200 celebrities and politicians whom the President considered dangerous.

16. Lee Pennington, Jr., a CIA agent, died of an apparent heart attack in October of 1974. Immediately after the Watergate arrests two years earlier, he had been sent to ransack burglar James McCord's home. Richard Helms, the CIA chief at the time, did not reveal this fact to any investigators.

It was not until June 28, 1974, four months before Pennington's death, that the new CIA director, William Colby, reported to Sen. Howard Baker:

"The results of our investigation clearly show that the CIA had in its possession, as early as June, 1972, information that one of its paid operatives, Lee R. Pennington, Jr., had entered the James McCord residence shortly after the Watergate break-in and destroyed documents which might show a link between McCord and the CIA."

17. J. Clifford Dieterich, a 28-year-old secret service agent assigned to Nixon, was killed when the president's helicopter crashed off the Bahamas in May of 1973.

Dieterich was one of seven men in the helicopter, but the only one to die. Miss Brussell believes that in guarding Richard Nixon, he may have come to know too much.

18. Clay Shaw, who years earlier had been acquitted of conspiring to kill John F. Kennedy, died of a heart attack, on August 16, 1974.

His death came just weeks after Victor Marchetti, author of "The Cult of Intelligence," revealed that Shaw had worked for the CIA. He had been on assignment in Mexico in 1963 at the same time as CIA agent E. Howard Hunt and Lee Harvey Oswald.

Shaw was cremated. There was no autopsy.

19. Merle D. Baumgart, an aide to Rep. Peter Rodino of the House Judiciary Committee on Impeachment, was killed in a traffic accident on May 20, 1975. Washington police described his death as "a routine traffic accident" — until they received an anonymous call to "look into it."

According to the Portland Oregonian of June 30, 1975, U.S. agents joined the probe but kept it secret because of the "stature of some individuals who might be involved."

Miss Brussell speculates that in his work to impeach Nixon, Baumgart may have come across some dangerous information.

20. Nikos J. Vardinoyiannis, a Greek shipowner who contributed funds to Nixon's presidential campaign, died of undisclosed causes in 1973. Watergate prosecutor Leon Jaworski was investigating Vardinoyiannis when the Justice Department declared that the Greek's contribution of $27,000 was not illegal.

The Department reached this conclusion, Mae Brussell says, even though the contribution was made after one of Vardinoyiannis' companies was contracted to supply fuel for the U.S. 6th Fleet, and even though federal law bars foreign contractors from contributing to U.S. political campaigns.

21. Joseph Tomassi, the 24-year-old head of the American Nazi Party in California was shot to death on the front steps of his Los Angeles headquarters, on August 15, 1975.

Two years earlier, the Los Angeles Times had reported that "the Committee to Re-Elect the President gave $10,000 in undisclosed funds to finance a surreptitious campaign to remove George Wallace's American Independent Party from the 1972 California ballot."

The Times went on to say that "$1,200 of the fund found its way to Joe Tomassi, head of the Nazi Party in California."

22. Mrs. Louise Boyer, Nelson Rockefeller's assistant for 30 years, fell to her death from a 10th story New York apartment on July 3, 1974.

At the time, as a consequence of Watergate, Rockefeller was being considered for the vice-presidency. Accusations had been made that he had been involved in the illegal removal of gold from Ft. Knox. It's believed that Mrs. Boyer supplied the investigators with this information.

23. Jose Joaquin Sangenis Perdimo, a Cuban exile who worked with the CIA at the Bay of Pigs, died mysteriously in 1974. Code-named "Felix," he had worked with Watergate plumbers Hunt and Barker. In 1972 he was awarded a secret merit medal by the CIA.

24. Rolando Masferrer, another Cuban exile employed by the CIA, was blown to bits when his car exploded on October 5, 1975. Masferrer had worked with "plumbers" Hunt, Sturgis and Barker.

According to Miss Brussell, "He would have been investigated for his activities in connection with assassination attempts on foreign leaders, had he not been killed."

25. Lou Russell, an old friend of Nixon's from the "Red Scare" days, died of natural causes on July 31, 1973.

In testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, Nixon's secretary Rosemary Wood stated: "I met Lou Russell once when he came to the office. He said he worked on the old House Un-American Activity Committee and that he needed a job."

Russell found a job alright, with "McCord Associates," a CIA front run by Watergater James McCord.

26. Jack Cleveland, a partner of the president's brother Donald Nixon, died in Canada in November of 1973. At the time he was wanted for questioning in connection with a possible government pay-off to Howard Hughes.

Cleveland was suspected of being a go-between in a deal whereby Nixon's brother gained an interest in a large Nevada ranch allegedly in exchange for the president's clearing the way for the billionaire's take-over of Air West.

"When Watergate came apart," Miss Brussell says, "this deal came under investigation."

27. Richard Lavoie, chief of security for International Telegraph and Telephone, died of a heart attack on December 27, 1972.

At the time Lavoie was guarding Ditta Beard, an ITT secretary who claimed she had a memo that her company had contributed $400,000 to Nixon's campaign fund so that John Mitchell would not bust up some of ITT's holdings.

When columnist Jack Anderson broke this story, Miss Beard was moved from Washington to Denver, Colo., where she was hospitalized for an apparent heart attack. She was whisked away, Anderson claimed, so that she couldn't testify.

RICHARD M. NIXON: his ruthless quest for power led to the biggest scandal in American political history and may have led to the deaths of 30 people.

Miss Brussell suspects that Lavoie may have heard too much from Ditta Beard.

28. Mrs. Andrew Topping, the wife of a man arrested for plotting to kill Nixon, died of gunshot wounds on April 6, 1972, two weeks after the Watergate break-in. Her death was declared a suicide.

Andrew Topping told police that "prorightist forces" beyond his control caused his wife's death.

29. James Morton, was President Gerald Ford's campaign treasurer. According to a New York Times report of November 2, 1973, Ford was being questioned by a senate committee prior to his appointment as vice president, and was asked about a secret sum of $38,000 used in his campaign for the House of Representatives.

The Times story stated, "Ford confirmed under questioning that a committee organized in Washington raised $38,216 for his reelection in 1972... but Ford said he did not know the names of the donors because the committee treasurer, James G. Morton is now dead."

Like so much of the Watergate money, Miss Brussell notes, no records were kept.

30. Martha Mitchell, estranged wife of the former attorney general, died on Memorial Day, 1976. A constant "pain in the side" of the Watergate conspirators, she was the first person to point the finger at Richard Nixon and suggest he resign.